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Mr. Bevin's leaven must work

THERE are gleams of light on the dark horizon. It counts for something in a bewildered world that British Foreign Secretary can speak such words in Parliament as

Mr. Bevin spoke on Friday last.

"The supreme act of Government is, after all, the horrible duty of deciding matters which affect the life or death of the people. That rests in this House as far as this country is concerned. I would merge that power

Observer's Commentary

into a greater power of a directly elected world assembly ... I am willing to sit with anybody, of any party, of any nation to try to devise either a franchise or a constitution for a world assembly, with a limited objective—the objective of peace ...

From the moment you accept that, one other phrase goes, and that is "international law." That phrase presupposes conflict between nations. It would be substituted by "world law," with a moral world force behind it, rather than a law built on case-made law and on agreements. It would be a world law, with a world judiciary to interpret it, with a world police to enforce it, with the decision of the people with their own votes, resting in their own hands, irrespective of race or creed, as the great world sovereign elected authority which would hold in its care the destinies of the peoples of the world."

Britain will never be able to go back on that. And however far the vision seems from realization at the moment,

seems from realization at the moment, the leaven will work. There will be a response to this vision of world-democracy. "The common man is the great protection against war," said Mr. Bevin, Mr. Bevin has spoken for him.

2 to I against Communism

MR. BEVIN'S statement, and the manifest honesty and candour of his policy, will, I believe, do much (though gradually) to resolve the tension of European politics towards democracy. It is becoming clear that the dynamic political forces on the European continent are divided, roughly in the proportion of two to one, between democratic Socialism and Communism. So long as Communism, following the Moscow star, is anti-democratic in principle, and opposed to the idea of a democratic society of nations, so long will demo-cratic government be precarious on the European continent. But when the moral leadership of the common man begins to pass from Moscow, then the Communist influence in European politics will begin to decline. Who speaks more faithfully for the common man of Europe today: Bevin or Stalin? I believe it is Bevin; and that the effects will show.

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

"SAVE EUROPE NOW": MoF TURNS DOWN ALL EIGHT PROPOSALS

PEACE SHALL SIR BEN KEEP OUR **CONSCIENCE?**

- ask Albert Hall speakers

THE MINISTER OF FOOD HAS TURNED DOWN FLATLY EIGHT PROPOSALS PUT TO HIS DEPARTMENT BY THE RECENT "SAVE EUROPE NOW" DEPUTATION. THIS WAS REVEALED BY MEMBERS OF THAT DEPUTATION AT MONDAY'S GREAT ALBERT HALL MEETING.

Thus the hopes raised last week by the Minister's cautious reply to an MP have been dashed, and efforts in this country to save Europe from starvation must be redoubled.

The Archbishop of York presided at the Albert Hall meeting, and the distinguished speakers "from all parties and none" hurried off to address overflow meetings at Holy Trinity Church.

His Grace declared that unless vigorous action were taken now Europe faced a tragedy, un-paralleled in size and horror. They were there to assure the Government of support in every step they could take to send relief to the stricken countries. It was wrong that the guilt of the men who had been the leaders of Germany should fall upon innocent children, and they must ask that the mass deportations, which were so greatly aggravating the problem, should cease, at least aggravating the problem, should cease, at least for the winter. He appealed to American generosity, upon which the main burden must lie. "The victors will be judged at the bar of humanity," he said, "by the way in which they answered the cry of the multitudes who are in such tragic distress." such tragic distress.

Sir Arthur Salter, MP, said that while all Europe would be cold and hungry this winter, in the East-Centre millions would starve. In the great cities of the Centre, even if all the food were equitably distributed there was only about standards. In Germany and Austria there would almost certainly be mass starvation—and at the

best, misery and enfeeblement.

The actual destruction of war was not the insuperable factor. Neither food, nor raw materials, nor ships were in short supply: For our part, we could release military reserves now and civilian reserves as soon as our imports were assured again.

Mr. Michael Foot, MP, said that meeting was called to express the conscience of the country.

If the responsibility for starting If the responsibility for starting the war rested with Germans, the responsibility for ending it rested with us. We had gone to war for a principle, and they were appealing to that same spirit which had enabled them to endure. "If Germany goes down in chaos then all Europe goes down with her. These children—are they the War Criminals?" he asked.

Mr. Robert Boothby, MP, held with

Mr. Robert Boothby, MP, held with Robert Louis Stevenson, that "There is a kind of decency to be observed." Our people had not fought to make a desert of Central Europe. He would add to the proposals in the resolution: tion. In Austria they amounted to one-third of "a population that has shown not the slightest inclination to resist."

Miss Eleanor Rathbone, MP, told how the deputation has laid the evidence of 60,000 offers of voluntary help in this country before Sir Ben Smith. "We made 10 proposals, and begged him, if he could them, to make proposals of his own. Two of the proposals were outside the

... CANNOT MAKE A HEAVEN IN OUR OWN COUNTRY AND LEAVE A HELL OUTSIDE MORAL PRECEPTS . . . CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLE ... MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER Φ. ement Attlee . Washington . 13 11.95 EXTRA FOR THIS XMAS Ben Smith London 13.11.45

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them. In his reply he makes his attitude clear when he writes:

"I am opposed to anything which would bring pressure to bear on people to surrender food to the detriment of their health or the health of their families.

"He knows best what is good for us. Frankly, Sir Ben," went on Miss Rathbone, "we don't like that Führer attitude."

Mr. R. R. Stokes, MP, described the deportation at half-an-hour's notice of a whole town. A serving officer had told him that "Central Europe as it crawls from East to West resembles

nothing so much as a vast Belsen."

Lt.-Col. Rees-Williams, MP, a recent Chief Legal Officer, Military Government, Berlin Area, spoke of the effect of events on "that impartial exponent of policies, good and badthe soldier, who pays for mistakes, often with his life." In European ATS in Berlin, it was clear that the men on the spot believed that our policy "will sow the seeds of the next

Air Vice-Marshal Champion de Crespigny outlined a scheme for the air rescue for the winter months of thousands of young children. "The snow is already on the German ground, and conditions deteriorate daily. There is nothing that the RAF would rather do," he said.

Mr. Victor Gollanz wound up the

They gave notice, meeting. that if our vast stocks, which he esti-mated at 4½ million tons—three times our peacetime level—were used to increase our own rations this "would be a grave affront to the national conscience." The talk about our own ill-health was shoddy disingenuousness. "If you don't trust the evidence of statistics, trust that of your own eyes."

Mr. College said it was apparent

Mr. Gollancz said it was apparent to the deputation which he had taken to the Minister that what stood in their way was the determination of Sir Ben "not to allow us to impair our own health. But we are free citizens of a

free democracy.

"Sir Ben must be reminded that he is not the keeper of our consciences, but a temporary Minister in a temporary Government."

After all the suffering of war, were they not allowed to make this tiny sacrifice for conciliation? He protested against extra Christmas rations "given us, admittedly, for our

scope of his Ministry, but as to the other eight—he would have none of them. In his reply he makes his save. He asked that meeting to reren in Europe whose lives they might save. He asked that meeting to remind the world of the true spirit of Christmas-" not more sugar or fats for our own bellies while our neighbours starve, but practical charity in the hour when mercy is most needed."

> The Resolution to be sent to the Prime Minister, asked for control of expulsions; a maximum contribution from our own stocks; and the acceptance of a scheme for voluntary contributions. It asked for an example of "far-sighted generosity."

"do right because it is right to do so"

I CANNOT accept the view that the policy of His Majesty's Government must be based entirely on the "Big Three." I recognize, as was said yesterday, that they are great Powers which, if exercising their responsibilities aright and justly can be sibilities aright and justly, can be a great umbrella for the security and peace of millions throughout the world. But if an ambassador, or representative, or a foreign secretary visits me to discuss a matter between his nation and ours, I cannot allow myself for one moment to consider whether ne represents a great nation or a

small one . . . I would be failing in my duty if I did not try to decide the issue on the basis of the facts, and do right because it was right to do rightnot because of my fears of what might happen if I did wrong. That is the principle upon which we must work, and I hope that will not be interpreted as being antagonistic to anybody. It does not matter whether it is a small nation or a big one. To me they are human beings . . . We must have regard to their history, their culture, their contribution and their civilizing influence—and I would say that civilizing influence is not determined by the volume of armaments you have got, but by the cultural development that

you possess.
—Mr. Ernest Bevin, House of Commons, Nov. 23.

WORLD GOVERNMENT

In our last appeal we wrote that what the world needed was a statesman with courage to propose world government now. The response has been remarkable. Not so much in terms of monetary contribution—though we gratefully acknowledge that—as of political developments which are also a matter of concern to us.

Already competent statesmen are talking of world government as practical politics; whilst the newspaper we quoted on the collective stupidity of man, the danger of an early end stupidity of man, the danger of an early end to civilized vociety and the need for leaders with vision returns to the theme with a new note of hopefulness.

"An idea which has hitherto been regarded by politicians as Utopian was for the first time urged as realistic policy from a Front Bench of the House of Commons."

Respectful, even cautiously sympathetic, attention is reported from the thoughtful part of the American press.

Many Peace News readers may remain sceptical and not without reason. But when the Utopias of yesterday are being put forward

in the name of political realism for tomorrow and are being canvassed in the chancellories and chambers and on the streets of the world's capitals as urgent practical issues, it is surely no time for the idealists to suffer from frustration! Revolutionary ideas my be as startling and explosive in their way as nuclear energy; for in attempting to make itself safe from atomic bombs the world has to pay more and more attention to pacifist principles and

Let us then support all who are seeking to attain right things from good motives by right means. To do so the PPU needs your support. Please contribute to our Headquarters Fund.

MAUD ROWNTREE, CORDER CATCHPOOL, Joint Treasurers.

Contributions to Headquarters Fund since Nov. 16: £10 16s. 4d. Year's total to date: £451 8s. 8d.

Donations to the fund should be sent, marked "Headquarters Fund," to the Treasurers at Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

OBSERVER speaks of the social incentives used in Russia as being universal compulsion and a highly differentiated wage rate; does he not overlook the vital factor of social consciousness, which is inculcated in the Soviet citizen from early youth?

Similarly, when he says that the war economy in this country was kept going by compulsion and high wage rates, does he not overlook the fact that during wartime social consciousness, usually at a low ebb here, reaches a comparatively high level and be-comes a real and important factor in the national behaviour?

Social consciousness in itself is not necessarily a good thing—it can too easily, too terribly easily, be distorted to favour the ends of a particular government instead of the common good. But I think that without it-in its best, purest form—we shall never

make any progress.

How is it to be initiated? In the schools. one supposes, where the children are now being plied with orange-juice, cod liver oil and milk, but where, I believe, little is being done to make them "come alive" as English citizens, as Europeans, as citizens of the world. It is an excellent thing that the nation should cater for the physical health of its children; it is a tragedy that as much is not done for their moral health.

PHYLLIS THOMAS. 45, Llewellyn St., Aberdare, Glamorgan.

Hold them to it?

THE bare bones of the political world of today as revealed by Bertrand Russell's recent X-ray pic-ture and by "Observer" week by week in PN are slightly revolting to the average comfortably placed Briton. Like a freshman medical in-ternee at his first operation he turns away just a little sick. But, unlike the internee, he is not compelled to a continuation of this experience as a

READERS WRITE

necessary preliminary to understanding and competence. If that's what the real world is like he'd much rather live in an unreal one as long as he can. He doesn't want either to understand or to be competent.

or to be competent.

He turns with relief to the musical-comedy atmosphere of the one romantic country left in Europe and reads with gusto the doings of his king and queen, princesses, dukes, earls, and Co-op'ers-cum-Lords. How the Moscow Dynamos fared last week is of more import to him than that Uncle Joe won't talk. Bogart's new picture is of more moment than Truman's latest pronouncement. Prospects of an earlier and better pension for himself are much more to the point than Attlee's conviction that "Europe must federate or perish."

The point of which is that it is futile for us as pacifists ever to hope or work for general understanding of the truth. For good or ill the fate of the world is in the hands of a few. These few have sought or have taken responsibility. They know that federation and national disarmament is the only political means to a solution of the problem of war. Our job as pacifists is to hold them all the time to action consistent with that knowledge, through every kind of contact with them that we can use. They must be helped and made to succeed, however impracticable federation may appear to be now.

And the alternative? Well, when "the glory that was Greece" faded it was followed by the light of the Roman sun, the light of pomp and power. Quickly that light, too, went out. Thereafter, darkness brooded over the face of the Earth for more than a thousand years. Let us mark well the supreme importance of the days in which we live

B. W. SIDWELL.

114 Regent Street.

Nelson, Lanes.

Relicose people

HENRY BARRATT'S letter would, in my view, he more correctly titled "Gambling People." The roots of war are embedded in the pattern of "Peace." War is a lottery, with men, women and children, the human lottery tokens. These are plunged into war's fast-whirling drum: the hand of fate withdraws a token, for a lucky or unlucky prize, and then back into the rotating drum again. War has its white prizes, as well as its black. Romance to the miserable: travel to the home-rooted: action to the inhibited: power to the impotent: reward to the unnoticed.

Only the enrichment of the pattern of peace until it becomes materially and emotionally satisfying can sterilize the deadly virus of war germs. This enrichment is technically and physically possible, as well as morally

PEACE NEWS

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Voice of the common man

THE common man is the great to exchange freedom for slavery. protection against war, said Mr. Hence the crucial importance Bevin; and in the same newspaper we read the atrocious and savage monologue of Hitler to his commanders on the eve of the war. Was it, or was it not, the common man who put Hitler into power? It was, but as Karl Jaspers says, he did it in a fit of delirium. The common man is our protection against war, only in so far as he retains the power to repent of his fits of delirium.

Hence the vital importance of a clear conception of the nature of democracy, which is essentially a system of government by which the people have the power, by peaceful means, to change their government. We have seen, and suffered from, the working of the law which Plato believed inexorable: that democracy passes into tyranny. Nothing British history warrants the belief that such a change is inevitable; but equally the recent terrible experience of Europe shows us that Plato's warning is not to be taken lightly. If the common man is to be our protection against war, we must be doubly on our guard against any perversion of the essential idea of democracy. And more than one perversion is being attempted today.

Democracy is a political system of which the essence is that there shall be at all times full freedom, secured by law, first for the unfettered ex-pression of minority opinion, and secondly for that minority opinion to organize itself so that it may become an alternative government, by peaceful and constitutional process. Where that full freedom does not exist, democracy does not exist. A democracy which puts into power a government which intends to circumscribe or abolish that full freedom, ceases by that very act to be a democracy. All the talk of "economic democracy something which may exist where the full freedom of political democracy do not, is not only nonsense, but danger-ous nonsense. To exchange political democracy for this hybrid and hum-bug "economic democracy" is simply

Hence the crucial importance of appreciating the fundamental and irreconcilable antithesis between democracy and totalitarianism; and the truth that Fascism and Communism have far more in common with each other than either of them have with Democracy. It does not make for peace to slur over or minimize this antithesis between Democracy and Totalitarianism. However ardently we may desire that Britain shall be friends with Russia, we must face the fact that, so long as Russia is a totalitarian society, so long a trust-worthy friendship between Russia and Britain is impossible: simply because the common man in either country cannot speak to the other. His voice cannot be heard. And no amount of sentimental theorizing to the effect that Russia is the country par excellence, of the common man will prevail in the long run, against the fact that Russia the voice of the common man

The peace of the world today depends on the growth of friendship between Russia and the democracies of the West. That is true. But it is equally true that the growth of that friendship depends upon the growth of political democracy in Russia.

Russia is now at the parting of the ways. She has won a great military victory: but it has been no moral victory. Her civilization, brought into sudden contact with the civilization of Europe—even in its latest progressive forms—has not been felt to be a superior thing. If Europe has felt the shock of Russia, Russia has felt the shock of Europe. It will not cease to reverberate. And if Western demo-cracy can find new vigour, new faith, new kope, Russia will not avoid being captured by her captive, as Rome by Greece.

Peace News is open for the expression of all points of view relevant to pacifism. Articles in it, whether signed or unsigned, do not necessarily represent the policy of the Peace Pledge Union, of which it is the weekly organ. Nor does the acceptance of advertisements imply any endorsement of, or PPU connexion with, the matter advertised.

DAVID JACKSON.
c o National Bank, Dublin.

Jobs for Observer

YOUR correspondent, S. J. Hayward, was scarcely just to Observer. What right had he to suggest that if and when this country is at war with Soviet Russia, Observer would sit back complacently and say, "I told you so"?

With the example of Herbert Morrison conscientious objector of World War No. 1 and cabinet minister in No. 2r before him, is it too much to hone that "Observer," then well nast military age, will be the man to lead this country through blood and sweat and tears to the unconditional surrender of our latest enemies? I could imagine no one better fitted for the task.

E. W. PATES.

19 West Lodge Court, West Acton.

How excellent are the letters held over because they are too long only the correspondents individually know. Letters under 250 words have by far the best chance of publication.

MUST express my gratitude to Observer in his difficult and unpopular task of exploding the Russian "Myth."

It is urgent that he should continue with even greater zeal, as normally objective people and responsible journals like the New Statesman, are continually acting as apologists for all the things they condemned when committed by "wicked" capitalist countries. When these are done by Russia, there is, according to the apologists, a very excellent reason however dastardy the action.

REX HULLAH. REX HULLAH.

25 West End Avenue.

Ardour and unity

The message that Pierre Ceresole's life holds for pacifists is peculiarly relevant to the PPU today. Our major activity before the war was an effort to collect signatories to our pledge in an attempt to influence Government policy by sheer weight of numbers. Faced during the war with a far more challenging and complex situation we have often failed to achieve that unity within our movement which is necessary for effective peace-making. peace-making.

Ceresole in his insistence on the value of

ceresole in his insistence on the value of internationalism based on deeds rather than words, and his distrust of mere "slipshod and indeterminate goodwill," his recognition of the necessity to work for peace with all men of goodwill whether pacifists or not indicated principles which we have tended to neglect

neglect.

Perhaps we have felt that if we had followed them we should have diluted the peculiarly pacifist contribution of "war resistance." But Pierre Ceresole was a convinced "absolutist" to the end and his record of imprisonment would satisfy even the most ardent resister in our ranks.

DEREK EDWARDS.

15 Shooters Hill Road, S.E.3.

Lambs and wolves

DACIFISTS have renounced war against Russia quite as definitely as against any other country. It is possible that Pacifists possess a more than average acquaintance with Russian history, literature, music and all other means of making contact with and understanding the Russian people. But Pacifists have not surren-dered the title to speak what they believe to be the truth about any state which incontestably invades what

which incontestably invades what should be common human rights.

Since the end of the fighting with Germany, the Russian state not only has exhibited power politics in relation to nine or ten neighbouring countries whose peoples could not resist if they would. It has gone much lower, by driving millions of settled inhabitants from their own lands, so that if it is true that refugees are now being helped, it was the helper which thrust them forth and shows no intention of letting them return. Even worse, the Germany which has to provide the means of help the conqueror has stripped of everything movable.

thelp the conqueror has stripped of everything movable.

If these things had been done by the Tsarism of forty years ago, what would not have been said! They are the more distressing and culpable now because the state responsible is just that which has gained the admiration of working people almost everywhere, and is the continuation of that which began by proclaiming no annexations, and still claims to be the protector of justice and peace.

As Pacifists we are as lambs among wolves; but lambs have the right to indicate a wolf when they see one, and especially a wolf which once acted like a sheep dog and still poses as such. And we can wish for the Russian people a state which by learning to give freedom at home can create peace beyond its borders.

PERCY REDFERN.

PERCY REDFERN.

Meadow End, Clement Road,
Marple Bridge, Stockport.

Pacifist enquiry

I wonder whether any of your readers will be willing to help me. I am making an enquiry into the "Origins of Pacifism." as it seems to me that it is quite important to know what is the most likely environment for pacifist ideas to germinate and develop. Any groups which are willing to help, and will send me a postcard, can receive as many questionnaires as they can deal with.

I might say that I have no personal axe to grind. If the results of my enquiry are interesting or significant, I shall hope to write articles for some of the pacifist journals.

FRANK E. MORETON.

Billingshurst, Sussex.

Not quilty- yet

Whilst even little Finland is now supplying her quota of war criminals, the wrangling multitudes curiously called the United Nations have so far been unable to produce one.

As we are now fated to exist under the shadow of the atom, let us devoutly hope that this blameless record may be preserved.

ROY COLLARD.

ROY COLLARD.

. 24 Litchfield Street, London, W.C.2.

War-criminals

WHILE in no way wishing to condone the conduct of the trial of Laval and his subsequent execution, I feel that Tom Everard, in his letter to you headed "Laval versus de Gaulle," has fallen into the old habit of regarding as something of a martyr a man who has been executed after a travesty of a trial.

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Is not the disturbing aspect of Laval's trial and the Nuremberg trials this ? It may be that many of the accused deserve to answer, before a responsible tribunal, for their part in bringing about the most shameful chapter in human history. But do many of those who will, in effect, act as prosecutors, judges, juries and executioners come with so much cleaner records that they are entitled to assume the responsibility of trying these men?

W. N. LAWRENCE.
42 Famet Avenue, Purley, Surrey.

No democrat

WOULD it not be helpful if some of your correspondents were to realize that there is no necessary connection between Pacifism and Democracy? There is even a necessary divorce between Pacifism and Communism, which Stalin has told us must

munism, which Stalin has told us must prevail through a series of shattering conflicts with the democracies.

Louis XV of France, drawing up a peace treaty, refused to grab more land than he thought just, saying: "I do not make war as a merchant." Ludvig I of Bavaria detested war and refused to spend a penny more than he could help on his comically small army. The Emperor Karl of Austria, stricken with grief at the sufferings of his people, made desperate attempts at peace in 1917, but Ribot, the French premier, was too good a democrat to listen to his envoy, a Bourbon prince, and the slaughter continued. Of them Anatole France, hardly a reactionary, said (my own translation):

"Ribot is an old scoundrel to have neglected use a concentral to he was reserved."

Ribot is an old scoundrel to have neglected

"Ribot is an old scoundrel to have neglected such an opportunity. A King of France, yes, a King would have pitied our poor people, drained of blood, racked, powerless to do more. But democracy is without heart and without entrails. In the service of the powers of money it is pitiless and inhuman."

As a pacifist I would prefer to be ruled by any of these three absolute monarchs than by Lloyd George with his "knock-out blow," or Stalin with his mass purges, liquidations, mass expulsions and shattering conflicts, or Truman with his atomic bomb. With regard to the latter, from the pacifist or even the mildly expulsions and shattering conflicts, or Truman with his atomic bomb. With regard to the latter, from the pacifist or even the mildly commonsense point-of-view, isn't the world safer while only one power retains its secret? It is to be hoped that Observer will not be deterred by those who have mistaken Stalin for the Vicar of Christ, from giving his lucid and well-balanced commentary, which is one of the few gleams of light in the fog of lies which journalism has now become.

MARTIN BOYD.

MARTIN BOYD.

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PEACE, PLEDGE AND PEOPLE

DACIFISTS feel a certain scepticism about the Charters, Organizations, Councils of statesmen and other current political incantations designed to induce a little unity among the United Nations.

designed to induce a little unity among the United Nations.

But the suspicion that the highest level of political action too often resembles the lowest level of human wisdom is mitigated by a cautious optimism about common humanity. If, we feel, there is to be peace, it must come from the people to the politicians.

This is not a doctrine that one expects to hear from the professional politician himself. PPU members may therefore be expected to sit up and take notice when the British Foreign Secretary says, as Mr. Bevin did on Nov. 23: "There has never been a war yet which, if the facts had been put before the common folk, could not have been prevented. The common man is the greatest protection against war . . ." The next day Mr. Noel-Baker, head of the British Delegation on the Preparatory Commission, told that august body that "There is no people in the world, without any exception, who would allow their Government to start another war."

That being so, what are we waiting for? Is Mr. Bevin about to propose unilateral disarmament? Apparently not. For the Truman-Attlee-Mackenzie King talks on the atom-bomb suggested no such happy millennium.

Fine words, in fact, butter no parsnips. If the common man is to protect us from war, if the peoples are to restrain their Governments from war, they must not only think the thought but do the deed personally, in order that the nation may do it corporately. Mr. Bevin's statement means the Pledge, 'I renounce war and I will never support or sanction another,' or it means next to nothing. The significant thing is that even the statesman now looks longingly to the pacifism of ordinary people for his will-o'-the-wisp

"I RENOUNCE WAR AND I WILL NEVER SUPPORT OR SANCTION ANOTHER."

This pledge, signed by each member, is the basis of the Peace Pledge Union. Further information from: General Secretary, PPU, Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh St., London, W.C.1.

It should come as a challenge to pacifists to reflect that most people in their neighbourhood heard these sentiments from Mr. Bevin rather than from the local PPU group. This is the historical moment at which the common people may see the urgent necessity of joining hands across all frontiers to prevent their statesmen from precipitating disaster.

From Dick Sheppard House we try to keep in touch with and encourage a dozen different ways of expressing that message: through personal example, in daily work, by social service, and in public action of other kinds. Our posters quoting the King's Speech, the Atlantic Charter and the Archbishop of Canterbury, and those featuring our own well loved authorities Dick Sheppard and George Lansbury, and the Pledge poster, ought to be seen in your district, and the newly-published leaflets "War Balance-Sheet." "Atom Peace" and "The Hungry" should find a way into every home. We shall do a vital community service by bringing the sentiments of statesmen to the test of action. vital community service by bringing timents of statesmen to the test of action.

ROY WALKER.

Conscription - the Gadfly

scription should be removed? Is it the evil that one would have us be-Is France, for example, the worse for having conscription as a natural event in her life? It is surely not wrong nor folly that the world should prepare itself for the inevit-able, and there is no doubt that men still regard war as inevitable, even now, after the atomic bomb and the To abolish conscription now is to encourage the belief that war is behind us, when really it is always some-

where in front. Conscription can be the gadfly to stir men from their slumbers, keeping them watchful guardians of the timorous Peace.

We all need a gadfly. Before the war we were too ready to accept words, and forget that deeds alone matter. Our list of signatories to the Peace Piedge was impressive, but we know now, to our chagrin, that a scrap of paper binds no one, man or nation. Suppose we succeed in removing conscription. We shall fall back into that complacent state of believing that all is well, that war is not again going. to overturn our lives and engulf us; and we shall forget the military staffs.

What about income tax!

Compulsion irritates to say the least, but it is accepted in many forms. Children must go to school, income tax must be paid, a man must work to live-and certain obligations to society must be met. Conscription makes the individual face up to the latter. new responsibility is thrust upon him and he realises that he has a selfish interest in maintaining the peace of the world. It is a curious fact also that many men hear of conscientious objectors for the first time only when they themselves become soldiers. Thus they are brought into contact with an alternative point of view, which they will either accept or reject. If they accept it, we rejoice; if they reject it, we redouble our efforts, or we can again rejoice, that a man is doing what he honestly believes to be right.

It is also objected that conscription

is wrong and unfair because it will touch only the young. That is true if we regard the young as forming an isolated, helpless group in the com-munity, like a flock of sheep at the mercy of the wolf. But they are not. They are part of the family and look to their parents for guidance and advice. If parents are for conscription, it is useless for us to plead on behalf of the young, who will find it hard to

set their face against parents and friends. What we have to do is to change the cry: "I have done my bit, you must now do yours," into: "? know what it means and you are not going to suffer it.

Conscription, therefore, carries the seeds of its own decay. To remove it immediately is only pandering to the aftermath of war weariness, making way for the old comfortable apathy. What we want is a vigorous, permanent opposition to it, and we are a long way at present from having that.

A. H. GERRARD.

WHY KAGAWA WAS FREED

Toyohiko Kagawa, the Japanese Christian pacifist leader, was twice interned because of his pacifism during the war, but on each occasion the military police let him out as they knew he would have the time and opportunity in prison to write the things he was unable to find time for outside!

Kagawa disclosed this in a recent interview reported in the Christian Century (Oct. 10).

The two Frances - and Germanies

To the Editor

AM afraid the Laval-De Gaulle controversy needs more space than a single letter. However, I shall endeavour to answer the questions put

I have never approved the way in which Laval was tried. Many of the French newspapers disapproved of the trial, too. I myself consider Daladier and Reynaud and their Government as guilty as Laval. We French people were materially and

morally unprepared in 1939.

To have declared war in those conditions is a crime, for nothing but defeat and its consequences could ensue. However I am convinced that Nazi Germany would have attacked France sooner or later. In that case our moral position would have been far better, and though the consequences might have been the same Pétain and Laval could not have supported Germany's plea that we declared war.

As a pacifist, I was in favour of the Armistice in 1940, but I never approved of the Vichy régime and its pro-fascist methods. Moreover, politically, Pétain made no end of mistakes, the main one being that the more remote a German victory appeared, the more eager he and Laval were to help to achieve it.

to achieve it.

The French realized gradually that collaboration was nothing but a dupery. True collaboration means that Germany and France should have been on an equal footing with each other. Do not forget that the Germans are mainly responsible for the black market. If they had been true collaborators they would have suppressed it by leaving us enough to eat and to clothe ourselves through normal channels.

channels.

The "therefore" of my preceding letter can be explained thus: The people of France, distrusting the Vichy leaders, inclined to and often took an attitude of opposition. Tom Everard's statement concerning the

development of the Maquis is quite right. However the hoarding of money by the French peasants through the black market can hardly be called moral. Moreover no one can fairly say that the Germans were loved by the French during the occupation. To say the least, they were very unpopular. The number of forced labourers who do not wish to return to France is very small; mostly those without family in France who have married and settled in Germany. I quite agree that apart from the concentration cames and the bombing, life in Germany was tolerable enough. The Germans have lived for four years on the looting of Europe and have left the Continent bare and empty.

If Mr. Niven is a pacifist and knows France as well as he says he does, I wonder he keeps so many prejudices towards that country. I think it is one of the main tasks of a pacifist to get rid of national prejudices and antagonisms. I do not think France is a country always prone to duplicity and cruelty. When some of her leaders, judges or citizens are, I, as a pacifist, protest against it.

EFFECTS OF OCCUPATION

A Frenchman could rightly criticize the British for many good reasons, but it is not the job of a pacifist to do it. As regards to France, I think Mr. Niven should realize what four years of occupation have meant. If this country had been occupied, I do not think that, in spite of your fundamental prosbity, your behaviour would have been very different. As far as de Gaulle is concerned, I do think he loves his country. I do not always approve of his policy, but I think it is better than the mess we should be plunged into, were he not there.

into, were he not there.

I think Peace News should rather put the stress on the Germans who have resisted the Hitlerian regime than try to justify the Hitlerian leaders and their accomplices. I am afraid the pacifists in this country do not know the German psychology. Facts are facts and we must not indulge in any wishful thinking. Individually Germans will certainly acknowledge your pacifist attitude, As a nation they won't. A true pacifist policy towards Germany now should therefore be to keep her under a strong rule and gradually teach the Germans to become less sheeplike and to getmore individual responsibility and freedom. It is the task of the anti-nazi Germans as well as ours. It may require several generations, because the process must necessarily be slow. But I believe it is the only one which is in accordance with a pacifist creed and that can accordance with a pacifist creed and that can

M. LECUYER. 23 Meadow Road.

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U.S.A. must follow the President

'OBSERVER' CONTINUED

THE affairs of poor Austria are looking up a little. At long last the Russians have agreed to the conversion of the currency, and a general election has been held. Three main parties have emerged, after the French pattern, which appears to be taking shape in Germany also: Communists, Socialists, and Catholic democrats (the Austrian People's party). That is not the British pattern. Probably it is much less stable. The Communists and Socialists are bound together by their anti-clericalism; the Socialists and the Catholic democrats by their democracy. Durable coalition between the three will be hard to achieve.

Yet anything else has obvious dangers. A combination of Communists and Socialists means a deepening of the religious cleavage; a combination of Catholic democrats and Socialists of Catholic democrats would leave the Communists free to exploit the inevitable hardships of the industrial working class. The new industrial working class. The new political division obviously corres-ponds to the main currents of Continental opinion; but the problem of translating it into workable democratic government is a serious one.

If it were not for the international aspect the Communists could be ignored. For their defeat in a genuinely free election is overwhelming and significant. A Socialist-Catholic coalition would manifestly represent the great mass Austrians.

But, of course, the Communists are a special case, and quite how they will react to the verdict of the polls—in Vienna or by remote controlto be seen. However, that verdict is inescapable, and first-hand experience of the Red Army must have contributed largely to it. Critics may now appreciate my scepticism as to the equity of Communist dominance in neighbouring countries election is likely to be held.

Law out of Nuremberg

TT is much too facile to dismiss the Nuremberg trials as a caricature of justice, because they cannot be fitted into the framework of existing conceptions of legality. Legality has also to adjust itself to social needs, if it is not to be brought into contempt. The indictment of the ruling class of Nazi Germany is a heavy one; and something which may still be called the conscience of Europe would be outraged if it were not pressed

The record of Hitler's address to his commanders on August 22, 1939, looks authentic, on internal evidence. If it is not an indictable offence, by accepted principles of law, for a Head of State to talk such abominations, or for his commanders to give ear to them, it is high time it was made one. So long as the accused are given full freedom of defence, as they are to be given, and so long as the trials are public, as they are, the Nuremberg trials may be not a farce, but the overdue beginnings of a new reign

Spirit of Heidelberg

IN this connection it is well to ponder the words spoken by the German philosopher, Karl Jaspers, the new Rector of Heidelberg University, spoken at the reopening of the Medical School on Aug. 15 last.

"We have not fallen into the hands of barbarian peoples, but of peoples who recognize as the foundation of their life the rights of man which in their history they once solemnly proclaimed . . Our fresh start cannot, however, simply take the form of a return to the conditions which existed before 1933. Too much has happened. The catastrophe has gone too deep . . It was possible in the collapse of all values to

seek for death—in 1933, the example, when after the breach of the constitution through a legal quibble the dictatorship was established and all opposition swept away in the delirium of a great part of our people. We could have sought for death when the law-lessness of the regime showed itself openly on June 30, 1934, or in the robbery, deportation and murder of our Jewish friends and fellow-citizens and, when in 1938 throughout the whole of Germany the synagogues—the houses of God—were to our indelible shame and guilt burnt to the ground. We could have sought death in the war when the Government from its very beginning acted in violation of the thesis of our greatest philosopher, Kant, who laid it down as a basic stipulation of international law that no acts must be committed in war which would make a later reconciliation absolutely impossible. Thousands in Germany have sought, or at least have found, death in opposition to the Government, most of them anonymously. We who survive have not sought death. When our Jewish friends were taken away, we did not go into the streets and cry aloud till we also met our death. We preferred to remain in life for the weak, if justifiable, reason that our death would not in any way have helped. It is our own fault that we are still alive. (Christian News-Letter, Nov. 14.)

The spirit that speaks there will not be outraged by the trial of the Nazi leaders; rather it would be outraged

be outraged by the trial of the Nazi leaders; rather it would be outraged if they were not tried.

Stalin broods; Truman jumps

IT is notable that, at the time of writing, the Washington declaration on the atom-bomb had not yet been published in Russia. Those who profess to know Russian ways say that this is a good sign, indicating that Russia realizes that the declaration must be taken seriously. Not so good, perhaps, when we consider the implications of the fact that it is possible to withhold a statement of such international importance from the public so long. Since it seems to us that the secrecy, and not the policies of Russia are the most serious obstacle to the birth of confidence, we must set on the credit side that the freedom allowed to correspondents in Russia has increased since their united

protest to Molotov.

Another point in regard to the declaration needs to be made. The course to which Mr. Attlee persuaded President Truman puts the President now palpably in advance of American public opinion. That is where an American President ought to be in these days. But President Truman has had to jump.

A task for U.N.O. to face

CRITICS have seized on the evident contradictions of the declaration. "The statesmen come out, in their sixth point, with the solution that they will share their secret with the Russians 'just as soon' as the new Commission has done what the first three points declare to be impossible—that is, to crect effective enforceable safe-guards against the military use of atomic energy." (Economist, Nov. 24.)

For all that, the declaration is not nugatory. The impasse which it registers is real. And it is of the utmost importance that UNO should acquire some substantial reality by coming to grips with it. Until that is done, there is no possibility of easing relations between Russia and the West. That problem is one of immense difficulty, indeed one which one would pronounce quite insoluble, were it not for the pressure of atomic energy. But that pressure is real; nothing can conjure it away. And, however insoluble the problem looks, if regarded from habitual points of view, it must not be forgotten that there is now a power in existence so mighty that it can compel a change even in habitual points of view. "America will never consent to this; Russia will never consent to that" -are no longer true. The nations simply do not know what they may onsented to by 1950.

NATIONAL COUNCIL

The general secretary's report in Peace News last week of the meeting of National Council should have stated that, because of recent Executive decisions, Roy Walker has resigned from Council and Executive.

W.R.I. clothing reached Europe

THE WRI have recently been able to send nine bales (nearly a ton) to Norway and nine more bales are ready for despatch to Norway and to

mostly orphaned and homeless, who have lived recently by looting. The children are now in homes for deliquents, and are not eligible to receive clothes through official channels. Pastor Hugenholtz will be able to supply to

Holland.

WRI welcome additional gifts of blankets, clothes, and shoes, which should be washed and repaired before they are sent. Needles, cotton, buttons, etc., are also urgently needed.

Under a special arrangement these bales are handed over to the WRI representative in the receiving country for distribution.

In the case of Holland, Pastor Hugenholtz has undertaken a special responsibility. There are 1,000 Rotterdam children aged 10-17,

"ATOMIC HONOUR"

POTH Britain and America, who are surely the most honourable belligerents in the world, have in fact used the atomic bomb not once but twice. It is a little remarkable to suppose that other and presumably more dishonourable belligerents will refrain, on humanitarian grounds, from doing what we our-selves have already done. -Capt. Blackburn, MP, Nov. 22.

Pacifist echo at Nuremberg

A CCORDING to a Washington report reaching the Central Board, one of the charges against the twenty Nazi chiefs now on trial at Nuremberg relates to particularly relentless cruelty to pacifist groups in Germany. Sub-section D (3), (c), (iii) of the first count of the 24,000word indictment includes the follow-

ing allegation:
"The persecution by the Nazi conspirators of pacifist groups, including religious movements dedicated to pacifism, was particularly relentless and cruel."

IN TIME FOR CHRISTMAS!

AM sorry that we are late with our cards this year. Large quantities of three different cards are now available. Orders sent to Dick Sheppard House, 6 Endsleigh Street, available W.C.1, will be dispatched as quickly as possible. Because we are late we your support all the more Although we have let you down we ask that you will not let us down! Order soon.

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PACIFIST COMPOSERS

NEW works by Michael Tippett and Benjamin Britten, both Sponsors of the PPU, have provided notable musical events in the past few weeks.

The performance by the Liverpool Philharmonic of Tippett's "Symphony (1945)" was commended by the New Statesman critic as "Tippett's finest work, that is, as good as anything being written today.

Britten and the Morley College Choir, under Michael Tippett, were performers at two concerts in commemoration of the Purcell anniversary. In addition to works by Purcell, there were new composition homage to Purcell by Britten. compositions

P.N. SELLERS AT HYDE PARK

On a recent Sunday six literature-sellers, including two with Peace News, were arrested at the "traditional" pitch outside Hyde Park. They were charged with wilful obstruction, and after two remands, convicted. One, with previous fines on similar charges, was fined; the others were bound over.

The magistrate said that under this charge it was not necessary to prove obstruction. He was satisfied that, on this occasion, there was very little, if any, actual obstruction, Nevertheless, a technical offence had been committed, and he warned the defendants that if they will "set themselves against the law" they must expect to come into conflict with the police.

Some of us feel that the matter cannot rest Some of us feel that the matter cannot rest there. I would like, therefore, to hear from volunteers willing to sell Peace News at this pitch on Sunday afternoons.

ROGER PAGE PPU Londo rea Organiser). 8 Endsleigh Gardens, W.C.1.

EASTER YOUTH CONFERENCE

A Young Peoples' International Conference at Sherwood School, Epsom, is being arranged by PPU Youth Committee for Easter, 1946. In addition to lectures, discussions, etc., therwill be walks and games. Particulars on application to Patrick Figgis. 6 Endsleigh Street. W.C.1 Street, W.C.1.

WORDS OF PEACE - No. 161

The pure money motive, like the over motive, has failed humanity. What is needed in its stead is a conscious lesson learned and re-learned until it becomes an unconscious part of our make-up, that we must regain an essentially religious regard for the biological values of Nature. We must cease thinking that we know better than God and realize that we are only part of a whole which cannot with impunity destroy life in soil or plant; in animal or man.

-The Earl of Portsmouth.

Wanted: 200 German children for rescue

A LREADY over 200 offers to give hospitality to German children during the coming winter have been received as a result of the suggestion made by Mark and Irmgard Fitzroy in Peace News. In addition, a number of people who are unable to offer accommodation have indicated their willingness to help either with financial assistance or the provision of rationed foods, clothing or clothing coupons. Two women have promised to give £20 towards the support of a German child, as well as half a pound of margarine, five points, and a parcel of non-rationed food a month!

Reference to the appeal was made in the Sunday Times.

Although the initial response has been encouraging, many more offers will be required if a strong case of admitting the children is to be presented to the Government. Offers should be addressed to the Service Secretary. Dick Sheppard House, 6 Endsleigh Street, London, W.C.1.

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